

TRIAL BY FIRE: Lives Re-Forged Lands Coveted Spot in DocuWeeks 2012 Showcase

Ohio native, *Calais Weber*, featured in *Inspirational documentary:*
Theatrical runs in NYC and L.A. will qualify film for Academy Award consideration

TRIAL BY FIRE: Lives Re-Forged has been chosen by the International Documentary Association's (IDA) for the prestigious **DocuWeeks 2012 Showcase**. The film was selected from among a handful of "outstanding new documentaries from around the world" for theatrical screenings this summer, which will allow it to qualify for Academy Award consideration.

TRIAL BY FIRE: Lives Re-Forged, celebrates the journeys of burn survivors who rise above their injuries to discover unexpected insights and a transformed worldview. The film, which features war veteran and popular celebrity, **J.R. Martinez** ("All My Children" "Dancing With the Stars") will be shown twice daily at the **IFC Center in New York City (Greenwich Village) Friday, August 3 – Thursday, August 9** and at the **Laemmle NoHo 7 Theater in Los Angeles (North Hollywood) Friday, August 10 – Thursday, August 16.**

Calais Weber, who grew up in Akron, OH, is also featured in the film and will attend the World Premiere in New York. At 15, Ms. Weber was badly injured in a high school chemistry class explosion at a private Ohio boarding school when proper safety precautions were not observed by the teacher. Burned over 45% of her body, Ms. Weber had a challenging but successful recovery and went on to achieve her dream of academic excellence when she graduated from Wellesley College last spring.

Director/Producer Megan Smith-Harris was profoundly moved by Ms. Weber's story. "What happened to Calais is heart-wrenching," says Smith-Harris, "A child should be safe in school and she just wasn't. But despite her injuries, Calais managed to overcome depression, post-traumatic stress and body image issues and today she is a happy and confident young woman. I admire her tremendously."

Ms. Weber is a now volunteer with Angel Faces, a California retreat for young women with facial burns and scarring and says her burn injuries don't define her, "they are just a small part of who I am."

Ms. Smith-Harris, who had never met a burn survivor prior to undertaking the documentary, was motivated to make the film after seeing a photograph of burn survivors in a magazine. “I experienced a jolt of understanding that gave me instant empathy,” she recalls. “I realized accidents can happen to anyone at anytime. You think it’s just an ordinary day... until it isn’t.”

The film features other emotionally captivating stories – a distraught mother jumps through a window to save her son engulfed in flames, an oil refinery worker survives a major blast only to face even greater challenges, a house fire devastates a family of seven, and a young racecar driver makes a miraculous comeback after being pulled from her fiery wreck. Through extraordinary courage, grit, and determination, all re-forge their destinies by first imagining – and then embracing – new dreams.

“These are stories that could save your life,” says Smith-Harris. “The film takes you on an emotional journey, one that doesn’t pull any punches but is ultimately, inspirational.”

TRIAL BY FIRE: Lives Re-Forged

When you forge metal with fire, it becomes stronger.

It turns out the same is true of the human spirit.

For further information, film clips or to schedule an interview with either Calais Weber or Megan Smith-Harris, please contact:

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Website: <http://www.TrialByFireDoc.org>

IndieGoGo Campaign: <http://www.indiegogo.com/TrialByFireDoc>

Original Song “Hope Lies Inside”: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBkG-tbQPB8>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/TrialByFireDoc>